

(Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1017 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1027

At the request of Mr. STRANGE, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1027 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1032

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1032 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1033

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1033 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1056

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1056 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2810, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 1814. A bill to provide support for the development of middle school career exploration programs linked to ca-

reer and technical education programs of study; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. KAINE, Mr. President. Far too many students leave our Country's classrooms ill-equipped to keep up with the demands of the 21st century job market. Many enter high school and postsecondary education uninformed of the range of careers available to them. For our Country's continued success, it is essential that our young people have exposure to the vast range of available work and career options early in their academic careers so that, by the time they begin high school, they are more knowledgeable about future paths and what they need to do to pursue them.

Wherever I travel through Virginia I hear the same thing from business owners, manufacturers, and plant managers: there are good paying jobs out there, we just need to train our students with the skills to fill them. Middle school is a time for students to begin thinking about what they want to pursue in life. Helping them explore how their coursework could support those interests can make a valuable difference down the road.

Programs that focus on career and technical education (CTE) allow for students to explore their own strengths and passions, as well as how they match up with potential future careers. But limited funding for middle school CTE programming often requires students to wait until high school for access to this type of experience.

This is why I am pleased to introduce today the Middle School Technical Education Program Act, or Middle STEP Act. This bipartisan legislation creates a pilot program that allows for middle schools to partner with colleges and local businesses to develop and implement CTE exploration programs that give students access to apprenticeships or project-based learning opportunities. Additionally, middle school CTE programs funded through the Middle STEP Act would give students access to career guidance and academic counseling to help them understand the educational requirements for high-growth, in-demand career fields. Programs would assist students in drafting a high school graduation plan that demonstrates what courses prepare them for a given career. The programs must also provide a clear transition path from the introductory middle school program to a more narrow focus of CTE study in high school, and must be accessible to students from economically disadvantaged, urban and rural communities.

I believe this meaningful legislation can propel young students toward the careers of the future, and help to fill workforce shortages across the Commonwealth and the Nation. I strongly encourage my colleagues to consider this legislation to allow for students to have opportunities to explore potential career choices and pathways early on in their academic careers. Their futures depend on it.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 255—CONGRATULATING THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ON THE CELEBRATION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS FOUNDING AND RECOGNIZING THE VITAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF ITS MEMBERS TO THE UNITED STATES

Ms. HEITKAMP submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

S. RES. 255

Whereas the National Federation of Federal Employees (referred to in this preamble as the "NFFE") was created in 1917 as the first union in the United States to exclusively represent civil service Federal employees;

Whereas the NFFE preserves, promotes, and improves the rights and working conditions of Federal employees and other professionals through all lawful means, including collective bargaining, legislative activities, and contributing to civic and charitable organizations;

Whereas the contributions of the NFFE are noted in history through a century of achievements for the Federal labor movement, including numerous reforms to workforce policy and working conditions;

Whereas NFFE members serve the United States by performing critical functions throughout Federal agencies, including the Department of Defense, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, the National Park Service, the Federal Aviation Administration, the General Services Administration, the Indian Health Service, the Passport Service of the Bureau of Consular Affairs, and the Corps of Engineers;

Whereas, through a partnership with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers and the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, the NFFE promotes better working conditions and an improved quality of life for working families across the United States;

Whereas the NFFE represents more than 100,000 Federal employees; and

Whereas the NFFE continues to ensure that the voices of Federal civil servants are properly represented: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate congratulates and honors the National Federation of Federal Employees on the celebration of the 100th anniversary of its founding.

SENATE RESOLUTION 256—RECOGNIZING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH AND CELEBRATING THE HERITAGE AND CULTURE OF LATINOS IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE IMMENSE CONTRIBUTIONS OF LATINOS TO THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SCHUMER (for Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. REED, Mr. KAINE, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HELLER, Mr. NELSON, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. WARNER, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. RUBIO)) submitted the